

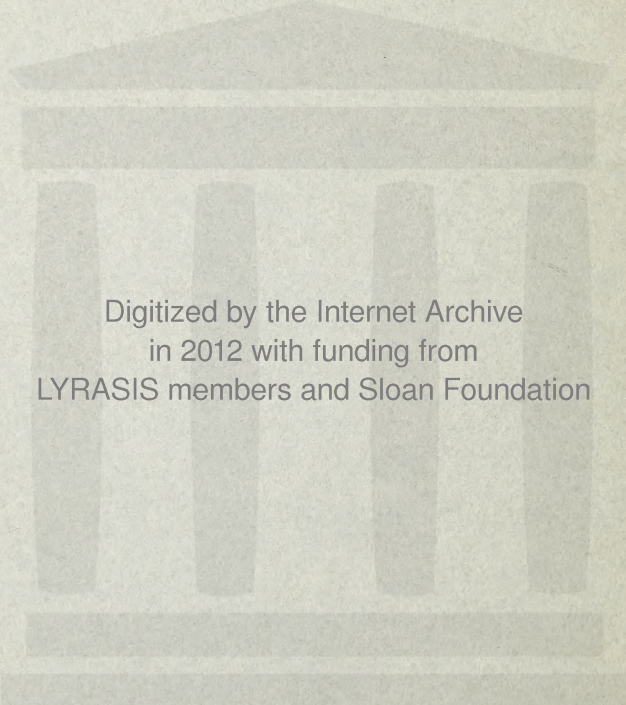
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ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE STATE EDUCATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF NORTH CAROLINA, AT WARRENTON,
JULY 1ST, 1857.

By

William Woods Holden



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THE STATE EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

OF

NORTH-CAROLINA,

AT

WARRENTON,

JULY 1ST, 1857.

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BY WILLIAM W. HOLDEN, Esq.

Published by request of the Association.

RALEIGH:
HOLDEN & WILSON, "STANDARD" OFFICE.
1857.

P. 386
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ALSO IN THE
GENERAL STATE

ADDRESS.

LADIES, FELLOW-CITIZENS, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE STATE EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION :

I AM here to-day, upon the invitation of the Executive Committee of the State Educational Association, to say something on the subject of education in North-Carolina, and particularly in relation to common schools. Unfitted as I am for this duty, and with no desire, I trust, for mere personal prominence or display, I nevertheless felt I ought to accept the position so kindly assigned me. There is no cause more important to a free people than that of education—education of the mind and of the heart; and it is the duty and the privilege of every one, however humble, to cast his mite into the treasury of this common cause.

Our ancestors did not come hither in organized communities, like those of the people of Massachusetts, but, as a general thing, in detached bands, from the other colonies and from Europe. They spread themselves over a wider surface, and their habits and customs were more varied and more dissimilar than those of many other colonies. In the words of our own historian, Dr. Hawks, "that portion of the United States included within the limits of North-Carolina, may justly claim the honor of having received the first English colony that was planted in the western hemisphere;" yet, owing to various causes, no permanent settlement was made till about the year 1660—forty years after the landing of the pilgrims at Plymouth rock. And although many of the early settlers of North-Carolina were men of education and refinement, and though they brought with them laws and constitutions, and the frame-work of civil and social government, and claimed the right, through their delegates or deputies, to enact new laws, and frame new constitutions; yet

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they were deficient in that organization which must always precede educational establishments, and which, in Massachusetts, for example, resulted, among the first acts of that colony, in the creation of public schools.

In the glowing account given by Mr. Bancroft, of the early settlers of North-Carolina, he says—"careless of religious sects, or colleges, or lawyers, or absolute laws, the early settlers enjoyed liberty of conscience and personal independence, freedom of the forest and of the river:"—and, he adds—"North-Carolina was settled by the freest of the free."

No allusion is made to education in the first and second charters of Charles the Second, nor in the "fundamental constitutions of Carolina." Civil government, based for the most part on monarchical and aristocratical principles, was founded; and the church—the old English church—following the footsteps of our ancestors, and intertwining itself with the civil fabric, sought to provide not only for their souls but for their minds and bodies. Jealous of ecclesiastical rule, and having witnessed or endured the misapplication and the perversion of learning in the schools of Europe, it is no matter for surprise that our ancestors were not inclined to endow and sustain parochial schools, the only ones probably of a public character which the government would have sanctioned. Besides, the rights of the masses of mankind were then comparatively unknown and undefined. The great body of the people at that day were expected rather to obey than to govern; and the condition of their descendants for many generations to come, was thought to have been already fixed. There appeared, therefore, even to the educated and active members of the colony, no imperative necessity for providing means for enlightening the masses; and it is to be questioned, if such means had been provided, whether they would have produced substantial benefits among a people so sparsely settled, so dissimilar in their origin, their habits and customs, and so jealous of their personal independence.

No provision was, therefore, made for public or common schools, by the early settlers of North-Carolina; and there was no printing press even erected till about the year 1750.

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The prominent men of the colony, themselves educated, as we have seen, for the most part caused their sons to be educated in Europe; and thus the light of science, kindled at an early period on these shores, was kept burning by regular supplies from the parent fountain.

But gradually, as the masses of the people emerged from obscurity and poverty, the old English neighborhood schools were established, and their children were instructed in the rudiments of knowledge. We know that the men of 1765, in the Albemarle, the Pamptico, the Cape Fear, the Orange, and the Mecklenburg regions, understood their rights as British subjects; and we know also, that the enlightened and patriotic leaders in the incipient struggles for independence, were followed by men no less patriotic than they were, and who possessed well-defined and sensible ideas of the meaning and objects of laws and constitutions. The freedom of conscience, the full recognition of the rights of property, and that high sense of individuality and of personal independence which characterized our ancestors, were the legitimate fruits of both mental and moral culture. If that culture was not as general as could have been wished, we yet know that it existed; and we can see its results in the resistance to the stamp act in the Cape Fear country, in the great deed of Mecklenburg, and in the fact, that the Congress at Halifax was the first, in all the colonies, to instruct their delegates in general Congress to go for independence.

The first public official allusion to the want of schools, is believed to have been made by Gov. Johnston, a native of Scotland, in his address to the Legislature, in Edenton, in 1736; and the first effectual act for the encouragement of literature, was a law passed in 1762, for the erection of a school-house in the town of New-Berne.

Constitutions are the products not merely of physical effort, but of thought. The founders of our liberties in 1775-'6, were noted for their thoughtfulness, their habits of observation, and the soundness of their judgments. They felt they were doing a work for all time; and they sought to add to the beneficence and grandeur of that work, and to

render it enduring, by binding the generations of all coming time to be faithful to what they had begun. They knew that liberty could not exist without knowledge; and so in the State Constitution, framed at Halifax, in December, 1776, they provided "that a school or schools shall be established by the Legislature for the convenient instruction of youth, with such salaries to the masters, *paid by the public*, as may enable them to instruct at low prices; and all useful learning shall be encouraged in one or more Universities." The establishment of public schools was thus expressly enjoined upon the Legislature; and the order in which the public school and the University is mentioned, shows the connection and dependence which the framers of the constitution thought should exist between them. They knew that the great river of knowledge was composed of many streams, and they wished first to open the fountains in all directions, so that the river might in due time be fed and filled. The language was mandatory—"schools *shall* be established by the Legislature." The schools were to be fit—"convenient"—accessible to all; and the salaries to the masters were to be "*paid by the public*." They provided, first, in the organic law, for the instruction of the children of the people at the public charge; and secondly, for "one or more Universities," in which "all useful learning" should be encouraged.

In 1789 the University of North-Carolina was established and endowed, but no provision was made for common schools. With all respect for the public men of that day, and with every allowance for the difficulties which surrounded them, this was a great mistake. The framers of the constitution did not err,—common schools should have preceded the University, or the same act should have provided for both. The edifice for the encouragement of "all useful learning" was erected by itself, upon the quicksands of ignorance, which threatened for a time to swallow it up; and hence the earnest and prolonged labors which were necessary to make it stable and enduring. But, though it shook in the blasts of prejudice and error, and though clouds and darkness now and then covered it, yet, as it settled, its im-

perishable foundations were made fast upon the rock of hope ; and the light of mind, falling upon it from a thousand points, which appeared after its erection, revealed it to the general public view, a fountain of mental and moral life in our midst,—an object which has long commanded, and which, I trust, will continue to command, in yet fuller measure, the support, the confidence, and the admiration of the whole people of the State.

Meanwhile, from 1789 to 1825, though the “old-field” or English schools were multiplied, and a few academies and high schools were established, no provision was made for common schools. In 1816, Hon. Archibald D. Murphey, of the county of Orange, then a member of the State Senate, made an able and highly interesting report to that body on the subject of public instruction, urging the establishment of common schools, and also of an institution for the deaf and dumb. The report concluded with a resolution authorizing the Speakers of the two houses to appoint three persons to digest a system of public instruction, and submit the same to the next General Assembly. The report and resolution were adopted ; and subsequently, and it is presumed under this resolution, Duncan Cameron and Peter Browne, Esquires, and the Rev. Joseph Caldwell, the President of the University, were charged with this duty. The committee never met, but a report was prepared by their chairman, and laid before the Assembly. In 1819, Mr. Murphey made another report, more in detail and more practical than his first one, suggesting a *plan* of public instruction. This was, however, preceded by a recommendation of some plan of common schools, by Gov. Miller, a native of Warren, in his message to the two houses in 1815 ; and to their honor be it stated, all the Governors of the State, so far as I have been able to observe, from the earliest period up to the full establishment of the system, made similar recommendations.

In 1825, the Legislature passed the first act on the subject—“an act to create a fund for the establishment of common schools.” To BARTLETT YANCEY, of the county of Caswell, is due the high distinction of having conceived and penned

the first act for the establishment and promotion of common schools, which took its place among our laws. This act set apart for the purpose certain stocks, the vacant and unappropriated swamp lands, the tax on auctioneers, retailers of ardent spirits, &c.—“the *parings* of the treasury,” as they were called by Mr. Yancey himself. But the funds accumulated slowly, and the friends of the system went to work by tongue and pen to increase the fund, and thus obtain means for starting the schools. Foremost among these, was the Rev. Joseph Caldwell, a scholar, a philosopher, a statesman, and a Christian. He wrote, and caused to be published at his own expense, in 1832, a series of “Letters on Popular Education, addressed to the people of North-Carolina;” in which he examined the whole subject with great care, showed the importance of educating *all* the children of the State, and urged the people to instruct their representatives to take early and effectual steps in this, their highest temporal concern. These letters, characterized as they were by clearness and simplicity of style, by sound common sense, and intense earnestness, produced a most happy effect upon the public mind. I was then a lad of fourteen, in the Recorder office in Hillsborough, in which they were printed; and I thus happened to the honor of aiding somewhat in putting them in type. I remember well the mingled surprise and gratification I felt in reading those letters; surprise, that the head of the State University, which was regarded by many even at that late day as an exclusive, not to say aristocratical establishment, should thus think of, and labor for, *the children of the people*; gratification, that his labors, and the labors of the eminent men who had preceded him, were about to be crowned with success. But the University was true then, as it is now, to the cause of general public instruction. Its present distinguished and patriotic head is known to have been always, as he is now, a fast friend of common schools; and indeed, the presence on this occasion, as on a former one at Salisbury, of persons of high standing in the University, is one of the best pledges that could be offered, if any were required,

of the friendship and co-operation of that institution in this noble cause.

No monuments have been erected to Murphey and Yancey; but there is one in the campus at Chapel Hill to the memory of Caldwell. Once a year, in the rich atmosphere of early June, and in the shadows of the stately oaks that crown the campus, as the young men who have gone up thither to be instructed in "all useful learning," and as the citizens, who have also gone up thither to observe their progress and to encourage them, muster together in procession and pass by that monument, every head is uncovered; and the homage of the heart thus offered, is far more impressive than any ever rendered at the tombs of emperors and kings. That granite column will decay; but the examples of such men as Murphey, and Yancey, and Caldwell will remain, to instruct, to direct, to animate, and to elevate succeeding generations.

In 1836, another act was passed, organizing "a Board of Literature"—providing for draining the swamp lands, and still further increasing the school fund. The public mind now began to be generally aroused on the subject; and several able papers, advocating public instruction, were presented to the Legislature in 1838—one by the president and directors of the literary fund, and one by Mr. W. W. Cherry, of Bertie, being a report of his as chairman of the committee on education. In 1837, the State received on deposit from the general government, under the deposit act of 1836, the sum of one million four hundred and thirty-three thousand seven hundred and fifty-seven dollars and thirty-nine cents. The greater portion of this was wisely vested in bank stocks and internal improvements for the benefit of common schools. In 1836, the permanent fund for common schools amounted to about two hundred and fifty thousand dollars; in 1837, to about one million seven hundred and thirty-two thousand dollars, exclusive of swamp lands.

In 1838, a bill drawn by Mr. W. W. Cherry, providing for laying off the State into school districts, and for submitting the question of "school" or "no school" to the people of the

respective counties, was passed. This act embraced the present plan of requiring each county to raise one dollar for every two dollars distributed by the literary board. In 1839, nearly all of the counties adopted the system; and in 1841, *it was put in full operation*. Mr. Jonathan Worth, of Randolph, from the joint committee on education in the Legislature of 1840-'41, reported the bill which finally passed, and is the basis of our present system. This committee consisted on the part of the Senate, of Willie P. Mangum of Orange, Samuel L. Arrington of Nash, William B. Shepard of Pasquotank, David S. Reid of Rockingham, Jonathan Worth of Randolph, Absalom Myers of Anson, and Thos. Ward of Lincoln; and on the part of the Commons of W. N. H. Smith of Hertford, Isaac Joiner of Pitt, Geo. W. Bannerman of Bladen, Duncan McLaurin of Richmond, Geo. C. Mendenhall of Guilford, John Walker of Mecklenburg, Nat. Boyden of Surry, J. R. Gilliam of Bertie, W. B. Wadsworth of Craven, William Eaton, Jr., of Warren, Cadwallader Jones, Jr., of Orange, B. L. Beall of Davidson, and E. P. Miller of Burke.

Having thus glanced at the history of education in the State, and having traced common schools from 1825, when the first permanent fund for the same was created, to 1841, when the system was put in operation, let us now notice the progress which has been made since the latter period, and especially during the last ten years.

North-Carolina extends over an area of 50,000 square miles, or 32,000,000 of acres. In 1840, her white population was 484,870, and her total population 753,419, or about 15 to the square mile. In 1850, her white population was 553,028, and her total population 869,039, or about 17 to the square mile. The increase of her white population from 1830 to 1840, had been only about 2 per cent., while her slave population was nearly stationary; whereas, the increase of her white population from 1840, when her common schools were commenced, to 1850, was 14 per cent., and that of her slave population for the same time 17 per cent. I do not say that this increase in population from 1840 to 1850, is to be attributed entirely, or even in any very great degree, to the establish-

ment of common schools; but I do insist that the prospect thus held out to the masses of general public instruction, and the benefits which it was foreseen would flow from it in the way of internal improvements alone, must have had an important influence in checking emigration to other States.

In 1840, the surface of the State—that is, the lands with the improvements thereon—were estimated to be worth on an average \$2 per acre, amounting to \$64,000,000; and all other property at \$136,000,000—making in all, as the value of the State, \$200,000,000. Now, the aggregate valuation of the lands or real estate of the State is estimated in the Comptroller's report at \$98,800,636 08; but I am satisfied this valuation is too low; and I assume, as a fair estimate, that the lands of the State, with their improvements, are worth on an average \$4 per acre—making \$128,000,000. Add to this 300,000 slaves, worth on an average \$500 each, and we have \$150,000,000 more; and then add to this live stock, worth \$20,000,000, shipping, lumber, naval stores, cotton and wheat in hand, and tobacco, manufactured and unmanufactured—all ready for market, and that can be spared—money at interest, stocks in banks, State securities, and all other personal property of whatsoever kind, and we have an aggregate of not less than five hundred millions of dollars, as the cash valuation of North-Carolina; showing an increase in wealth since 1840, of one hundred and fifty per cent., or, on an average, of nine per cent. per annum.

In 1840, when common schools were established, there were but two colleges in the State, but one hundred and forty academies, and but six hundred and thirty-two primary or "old field" schools. There were, at these colleges, about 175 students, at academies about 5,000, and at all the other schools about 15,000—making in all, male and female, about 20,000. Now, there are six male, and about ten female colleges; not less than 350 academies and institutes; and 3,500 primary or common schools. There are now at colleges not less than 1,500 students, at academies 12,000, and at common schools about 140,000—making, in all, 153,500 of the 215,000 children of the State, between 5 and 21, con-

stantly at school. One cheering fact is, that all the new counties and new towns at once go to work to establish their academies and schools; while many of the older communities in the State seem to have received new educational life. The new county of Polk has, for example, recently appropriated \$15,000 for a school in which to educate common school teachers; and if even half the counties in the State would "go and do likewise," the deficiency in our system in this respect, now so seriously felt, would soon be remedied.

In 1845, there was distributed by the literary board for common schools—the counties raising by taxation half the amount—the sum of \$97,852 44; and in 1846, the sum of \$95,578 65—making in all per annum disbursed and raised, \$146,700. In 1855, 1856, and 1857, there was distributed by the board for each year the sum of \$180,880—making, with the amount raised by the counties, the sum of \$271,320; showing an increase in ten years of the amount appropriated to common schools of \$124,620 per annum. This increase in the amount distributed by the board, is mainly owing to the increased dividends on bank stock, and to the income of \$24,000 per annum from the Wilmington and Weldon railroad.

In 1840, the permanent fund for common schools, exclusive of the swamp lands, was about \$1,800,000. Of this amount, however, \$600,000 were in the stock of the Wilmington and Weldon railroad, then unproductive, leaving only \$1,200,000 in productive stocks. Now, the permanent fund, exclusive of swamp lands, is as follows:

5,027 shares in the Bank of the State, at \$100 each,	\$ 502,700 00
5,444 shares in the Bank of Cape Fear, at \$100 each,	544,400 00
4,000 shares in the Wilmington and Weldon railroad, at \$100 each,	400,000 00
2,000 shares in the Wilmington and Manchester road, at \$100 each,	200,000 00
650 shares in the Cape Fear Navigation Co., at \$100 each, ..	65,000 00
500 shares in the Roanoke Navigation Co., at \$100 each,	50,000 00
Amount due by the State on bonds,	303,000 00
“ “ by Wilmington and Weldon Railroad Company,	52,250 00
“ “ by Literary Institutions,	31,824 30
“ “ by Individuals,	7,571 12
<hr/>	
Making,	\$ 2,156,745 42

Two hundred thousand dollars of these stocks, to wit, in the Wilmington and Manchester company, are not yet productive; while the Cape Fear Navigation stock is paying but four, and the Roanoke but one per cent.; yet the day is near at hand when the Wilmington and Manchester will pay six per cent.; and the value above par of the 10,471 shares of bank stock would more than cover—what I trust will not happen—the entire loss of the Cape Fear and Roanoke Navigation stocks. So the foregoing amount of \$2,156,745 42 may be safely assumed as the permanent productive fund now in hand. This does not include the swamp lands, which must, after a time, be a source of considerable income to the permanent fund; nor the tax on retailers and auctioneers, and entries of vacant lands, which are increasing every year.

Let this fund be sacred. Let no demagogue dare lay his selfish, itching palm upon it! It is the result of long years of anxious effort, and it has been solemnly dedicated to the noblest object that can engage the attention of a free people. Let us guard it with jealous care, and let us strive, by all just means, to add to it, and thus extend and deepen its field of usefulness.

There are persons here who can remember when there was no fund like this, nor indeed any fund; and when there was not more than one “old-field” school to every ten miles square. *We* can never forget it,—the thirst for knowledge, and the want of means to acquire knowledge. The rude cabins in which we studied our first lessons; the long and weary walks to school; the books we thumbed, and over which we pored—Pike, Webster, the Columbian Orator—all, besides the Bible, that we had; the pothooks and hangers we constructed, never getting hung ourselves, save in “Practice” or in “Tare and Tret;” the rivalry in spelling, and the trapping thereupon; the master’s looks, with well-brushed clothes, his watch in fob, with shining silver key; his face, so gravely kind, checking the wayward, encouraging the diligent, and drawing out the timid; his conscientiousness, doing his whole duty by the boys, and by the red-lipped, bright-eyed girls, for just \$6 by the year, duly subscribed be-

fore the school begun ; the rustic play-grounds, and the mossy spring, by which, in the thick shade, we took our meals at noon ; the ghosts we *thought* we saw, returning home late in the biting or the mellow eve ; the awe with which we looked out on the great world, so far away from us, and yet so near ; the poverty that dogged our steps and barred our way, yet fitted us for life and made us happy, though we knew it not—and the *State's poverty*, which denied us mental food : all this is fresh before us as of yesterday, graven on our memories in lines of fire ;—and if ever I forget those boys and girls, now men and women, or their children after them, or their children's children ; and if ever I forsake this, *their* cause, as it once was mine, may my arm be palsied and my tongue be dumb !

Nor has the progress of the University during the last ten years been less remarkable and gratifying than that of common schools. In 1846-'7, the faculty consisted of but ten professors and tutors ; now, there are seventeen. In 1847 there was no scientific school attached to the University ; now, there is one with sixty-nine pupils. In 1846-'7, there were 155 matriculates ; now, there are 440. In 1847, there were 38 graduates ; at the late commencement there were 69. The increase in the libraries has not been less than 25 per cent. During this time, Prof. Mitchell has issued a new edition of his work on chemistry ; and Prof. Chas. Phillips has prepared and published a treatise on trigonometry, which is pronounced by competent judges a superior work. The examinations preparatory to admission to college are more strict, I am informed, than heretofore ; and the standard of both preliminary and regular scholarship has been raised. And above all this, crowning it with what is vastly more important than mere learning, the moral government exercised over the students is in every respect most salutary ; which is apparent in the good order that prevails among so many spirited young men.

It is not my purpose, nor is it expected of me, to refer in detail to the other colleges in the State, or to the academies and institutes. It may be observed, however, and with

strict truth, that they are flourishing beyond all former example; and I attribute, in no inconsiderable degree, the prosperity they are enjoying to the establishment and successful operation of common schools. The common schools, if they have supplanted the subscription or "old-field" schools, have yet introduced five State schools for every one of the "old-field" schools thus discontinued; and, in many instances, grammar schools and academies have speedily risen up in place of the "old-field" schools. Education, therefore, so far from having been retarded, has been greatly aided in its progress by the common school system; not merely education of an ordinary, but of a higher grade. The colleges depend upon the academies as preparatory schools; these preparatory schools depend more or less upon the common schools; while, as we have seen, the very establishment and operation of the common school system have tended greatly to increase the number of preparatory schools.

In 1852, a State Superintendent of common schools was appointed. This was another important improvement in the system. It produced order, regularity, and accountability, which were so much needed. In 1846, for example, only 38 chairmen out of the 80 reported to the literary board the condition of the schools and of the funds in their respective counties. In 1855, all of them but one reported to the superintendent; and now, a failure to report is as rare as it formerly was common. The superintendent has visited the schools in various parts of the State—has established and enforced accountability in their management, and has seen, wherever it was necessary, to the proper disposition and application of the funds—has decided many important and perplexing questions arising under the law—has made from time to time full reports of the progress of the system to the Governor and to the Legislature—has labored, session after session, in concert with committees of the Legislature, to improve the law—has given his time, his attention, and his *interest* in the same, without pecuniary return, or the hope of it, to furnish a series of "North-Carolina Readers," *home* Readers, to the children of the State—has published through

his own efforts, and sent out without charge, a Common School Journal, one copy to each of the 3,500 districts in the State; and has, in fine, by both tongue and pen, and by incessant watchfulness and toil, made himself felt for good in all portions of the State. Looking at the results of his labors, and contrasting the system now with what it was before he was appointed, we are surprised that the office was not created sooner.

Our common school system, though by no means perfect, was framed with care, and has since been revised and improved as our own experience and the experience of other States have suggested; and it is now believed to be superior, both in its machinery and its results to any system in the slaveholding States. It commences, as Mons. De Tocqueville has observed, where all free government begins—in the primary county and township districts. It is thus bottomed in the public confidence. And herein we North-Americans differ from all other peoples. We acquire the rudiments of self-government and a spirit of local independence step by step as we acquire the rudiments of knowledge. We learn to govern ourselves from the captain's districts, and from the school districts, up to the county organizations, which are represented by sovereign States. And thus it is that authority is as promptly and as cheerfully obeyed as it is exercised; and thus it is that our people, schooled and skilled from the very start in the principles and in the practice of self-government, engage with so much facility and fearlessness in founding new States. There is nothing like it in ancient history, nor in the existing States of Europe. *They* have constructed from the centre to the extremities; *we* from the extremities to the centre, wisely distributing power, so that no portion of the State can be superior to another. Their fabrics, political and social, tend to consolidation, ending in oppression and decay; ours are strengthened as the extremities stretch out, and are kept vigorous and healthful by the fresh blood constantly poured back into the great heart of the body politic. We established a new order of things by beginning sovereignties in the primary districts;

they subjugated provinces and called them States, but provinces they are still. It would be something both novel and gratifying in human government, if out of these provinces, and with these strong central influences, they should ever succeed in creating enlightened, independent, self-governing sovereign States.

We have, first, in our system of common schools, school-committee-men, three to a district, chosen by the people. These have the immediate control of the schools. Secondly, county superintendents, generally seven, appointed by the county courts. These boards choose their own chairmen, one to each county; and they legislate, within their sphere, for the several districts. The chairmen are the executive officers for the counties, as the general superintendent is for the State. Thirdly, committees of examination, not more than three to a county, annually appointed by the board of superintendents. They examine all applicants for the office of teacher, and grant or refuse licenses to teach, as may seem to them best. Fourthly, a State superintendent, to whose duties and labors I have already briefly referred. He is responsible to the board of literature, which is charged with the management of the general fund, and also to the Legislature; and the Legislature is responsible to the whole people of the State. All the officers, teachers included, are members of one system, and should always act together, cordially and faithfully.

The teacher's occupation, from the common school to the University, is the most important and useful among us; but is not, it must be confessed, estimated as it should be. It is always laborious, and sometimes ungrateful; and its rewards are generally scanty and uncertain. But what higher calling can there be—save that of proclaiming the gospel of eternal truth—than that of training our children in the ways of virtue and knowledge? And what is it, after all, that chiefly sustains the competent and conscientious teacher? It is a sense of his integrity and of the exalted nature of his work. The vain, the arrogant, the ambitious—the man of foolish pride or of mere wealth, may overlook him, or under-esti-

mate him ; but his work speaks for him, and he has the respect and the sympathy of the wise and good. Toil on, then, ye faithful and indefatigable workers in the fields of mind !—ye are happier by far, and more useful to the world, than many who sit in Senates, or lead armies over fields of blood. Remember—remember, that you are co-workers always with the mothers of the land. Education begins with the first look and lisp of infancy ; and it implies the highest physical, mental and moral development of which human nature is capable. It begins with the mother. In the serene hours of the summer twilight, when the birds and the bees, the emblems of innocence and industry, have gone to their repose, and when God, in kindness to all his creatures, has shut the eye of day, the mother bends over her babe, and imagines for it in the future all of prosperity, of honor, or of happiness which her full heart prompts. *She* teaches it its first lessons of love, order, and obedience. Training it gently like some precious vine, she breaks no tendril of affection, and crushes no leaf which comes forth bearing the imprint of future hope. Affectionately at her knee, and reverently at that of the father, it hears for the first time why it was created, its responsibilities and duties here, and something of its destiny hereafter. In this family circle, so infinitely small when compared with the universe, it learns the reasons of that obedience which is the indispensable pre-requisite to future felicity ; and without which, from the cradle of the infant to the depths of space, in which countless worlds are floating, disorder and confusion would prevail. Placed here with only five senses, the mind is dependent upon them ; and their uses must, therefore, first be acquired. And then, as the mental and physical faculties are drawn out and trained, the affections, which have their seat in the soul, must also be evoked, and nurtured, and lifted up towards the divine fountain from which they flowed ; lest the animal obtain the mastery, and the shadows of sin and death fall over them eternally. Here, then, education begins—*with the mother* ; and the teacher takes up the threads in the web of the child's destiny as they fall from her hands. How important, there-

fore, that sound and healthy morals should pervade *all* our schools; that the lessons learned at home be not effaced, but improved, and new ones added as the pupil may need, or be able to receive them; that all our teachers should be men, whether members of churches or not, who “fear God and eschew evil;”—so that the good work begun by parents be carried forward, till the child is educated not only in mind, but *morally*, in all the exalted and saving affections of the heart.

The world is full—history is full of examples, showing the *paramount* importance of moral instruction to the young. “The end of learning,” said the great John Milton, “is to repair the ruin of our first parents, by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which, being united to the heavenly graces of faith, make up the highest perfection.” “Virtue,” says John Locke, “is the hard and valuable part to be aimed at in education, and not a forward pertness, or any little arts of shifting; all other considerations and accomplishments should give way and be postponed to this. Learning must be had indeed, but in the second place, as subservient to greater qualities. Seek somebody as your son’s tutor, that may know how discreetly to form his manners; place him in hands where you may, as much as possible, secure his innocence. Cherish and nurse up the good, and gently correct and weed out any bad inclinations, and settle him in good habits. This is the main point, and this being provided for, learning may be had into the bargain.” “And whosoever thou be that hast children”—said Miles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter, in 1535, in his “Prologue” to his translation of the Holy Scriptures—“bring them up in the nurture and information of the Lord. And if thou be ignorant, or art otherwise occupied lawfully, that thou canst not teach them thyself, then be even as diligent to seek a good master for thy children, as thou wast to seek a mother to bear them; for there lieth as great weight in the one as in the other. Yea, better it were for them to be unborn than not to fear God, or to be evil brought up; which thing—I mean

bringing up well of children—if it be diligently looked to, it is the upholding of all commonwealths; and the negligence of the same, the very decay of all realms.” Without this moral instruction, by both mother and teacher, mental strength is but the strength of the savage or of an insane giant, leaving naught in its path to gladden, or improve, or benefit mankind. As ignorance is the parent of the most degrading vices, so mere human learning without morals, is the prolific source of materialism, spiritualism, scepticism and infidelity.

Systems of public instruction have occupied the attention, and enlisted the energies of philanthropists and statesmen, both in Europe and America, for the last two hundred and fifty years; but it is in this country, where Church and State are kept apart, and where the education of the masses is essential to the perpetuation of our political and social institutions, that they have been most successful and prosperous. As early as 1494 parochial schools received the sanction of the Scottish parliament; and in 1615, “the Privy Council of Scotland empowered the bishops, along with a majority of the landholders, to establish a school in every parish, and to assess the lands for that purpose.” “The dates of this enactment, 1615,” says the American Educational Year Book, “and of the immigration of the puritans to this country, in 1620, are too close to each other to escape notice.” Prussia, one of the most enlightened constitutional monarchies in Europe, has long had a system of public schools, in which the lower classes of her population are instructed and prepared for the ordinary business of life. The Prussians say, that “whatever you would have appear in the life of a nation, you must put into its schools”—and they act accordingly. A love for “fatherland” is constantly inculcated in their schools—the national songs are sung, and the Prussian child is educated to believe Prussia and its government the best in the world. The result is, Prussia is one of the most thrifty States of Europe, and her people do not emigrate, as so many other European peoples do, to other lands. We seldom, for example, see a native of Prussia in this country. But all

monarchies and aristocracies, and especially those that are absolute, are founded and administered on popular ignorance; and even the King of Prussia is careful not to permit the introduction of liberal ideas into his schools. The republic of Chili, the most stable and respectable of the South-American States, has a system of public schools; and it is stated, as a significant fact, that her present President was elected mainly on account of his devotion to the cause of public education.

The people of Massachusetts preceded all others in America in establishing common schools; and they were soon followed by Connecticut, New Hampshire, and the other New England States. Nearly every State in the Union now has some system of public instruction; and a brief notice of the systems in the different States, may not be altogether uninteresting.

The State of Maine raises every year, by taxes, for common schools, \$333,019 76, and distributes from the State treasury, derived from stocks, \$71,644 78—making \$404,664 54, disbursed and raised for common schools. Every township is required to pay sixty cents for each white inhabitant. Her total white population in 1850 was 581,813. There is a superintendent of common schools, who is required to hold annually a teacher's convention or institute in each county. These institutes are in session from three to five days. 1691 teachers attended in 1855, 739 males and 952 females. The State has no normal school, and relies mainly upon these institutes for preparing and supplying teachers. Average length of the schools in Maine, in 1855, 4 months and 3 weeks.

New Hampshire has a permanent school fund of only \$17,000, but she raised by taxes for schools in 1855, \$212,346 17. Total white population 317,456. There is no normal school, but 22 teacher's institutes were held in 1855, with an attendance of 2,253 teachers. Average length of schools, 5 months.

The office of superintendent in Vermont has been vacant

since 1851, and we have no returns. There is no normal school. Average length of schools, 6 months.

The permanent school fund of Massachusetts is \$1,602,597 02, the interest of which is annually divided among such towns and cities as raise \$1 50 for each person between 5 and 15 years of age. The amount of taxes raised for support of schools in 1855, was \$1,137,407 76—total amount expended, \$1,266,436 42. Total white population 985,450. There is a board of education, whose secretary is the State superintendent. There are four normal schools, at an expense of \$14,500 per annum. Boston has one at its own charge. There are also eleven teacher's institutes, numerous county associations and a State teacher's association. Length of schools, 7 months and 16 days.

The common school system of Rhode Island was not thoroughly organized till 1851. There was expended for public instruction in 1855, \$154,614 40, partly from taxes and partly from permanent fund. Total white population, 143,875. There is a State normal school; also, a State institute for teachers.

Connecticut has a permanent fund of nearly \$3,000,000, yielding \$150,000 per annum. In addition to this the State raised by taxes in 1855, \$83,732 37—making, with other items of income, total expenditure for schools, \$342,049 37. Total white population 363,099. There is a State superintendent. There is also a State normal school. In 1855, eight teacher's institutes were held, with 755 teachers. To Massachusetts is due the credit of having established the first normal school on this side of the Atlantic, at Lexington, in 1839; and to Connecticut is due the credit of having originated teacher's institutes at Hartford, the same year. These institutes, though their sessions are necessarily of brief duration, are designed to teach the theory and art of teaching; and they have been of signal service in all the States that have tried them.

The great State of New York began to create a fund for common schools in 1795. Fifty thousand dollars were voted annually from the treasury for five years; and the towns

were required to raise by taxation an amount equal to that apportioned to them annually. In 1814, the system was put in operation. The permanent school fund is now about seven millions of dollars; the State constitution wisely providing that it shall be increased \$25,000 annually. She expends about \$3,500,000 per annum for educational purposes of all kinds, of which about one million is raised by direct taxation. Total white population 3,048,325. Average length of schools, 8 months. There is a State superintendent. There is a State normal school costing \$12,000 per year, and one or more teacher's institutes to each county. New York has graduated at her normal school, after a full course, not less than 1,000 teachers—5,000 have taken a partial course; and she is now providing "instruction in the science of common school teaching" for 1,800 pupils annually. Her common school system should command the admiration of the world.

New Jersey has a permanent fund of \$413,454 96. The whole amount appropriated to school purposes in 1855, was \$475,168 64, of which about one-half was raised by taxes. Total white population 465,509. There is a State superintendent. Eight teacher's institutes were held in 1855. There is also a State normal school, recently established, costing \$10,000 per annum.

Pennsylvania provided in her constitution in 1790, for common schools, but no system was attempted till 1831. In 1834, the State was districted for schools; and in 1854, her system was revised and much improved. The State now raises by taxation for schools, the sum of \$1,242,223 70—total amount expended for schools \$1,560,854 32; and this with a very heavy State debt. This does not, however, include Philadelphia, whose common schools are of a superior order and highly flourishing, at a cost of \$592,370 80 per annum. Total white population of Pennsylvania, 2,258,160. Average length of schools, $5\frac{1}{2}$ months. There is a State superintendent, but there are no normal schools or teacher's institutes under State patronage.

Delaware has a permanent fund of \$435,505, and raises by taxation \$24,000 per year. She has no normal school.

Maryland has no general system of public instruction. There is a permanent fund yielding about \$70,000 per annum, which is divided among academies and schools of a lower grade. Baltimore has, however, an excellent system, and devotes to it about \$110,000 per year.

Virginia has no general common school system. The State has a literary fund of \$1,588,020 44, the income of which is about \$90,000. Of this, \$75,000 per annum are distributed to the "poor" schools and district schools, and \$15,000 to the University. There is no state superintendent, and no normal schools. Total white population 894,800. In 1850, Virginia had 12 colleges of all kinds, with 1343 pupils—303 academies and high schools, and 2,937 public schools.

South-Carolina, like Virginia, has a narrow and defective system, intended solely for the "poor." The State has no school fund, but appropriates directly from the treasury. In 1854, she expended \$30,000 for military schools, \$22,000 for the State college, \$20,000 for the medical college, \$20,000 for the Charleston college, and but \$75,000 for her "poor" schools. Her school system for the masses is a "pauper" system, so characterized by Gov. Hammond in 1843. But Col. Memminger and other enlightened public men, are rousing the public mind to the importance of some adequate system of *common* schools; and the people of Charleston, at least, are doing their duty on the subject. Total white population of the State, 274,563. In 1850, South-Carolina had 8 colleges, with 720 pupils—202 academies, with 7,467 pupils, and about 40,000 pupils in all her schools. The number at present is probably 60,000.

Georgia has also a "poor" or "pauper" system. There are two school funds of \$300,000 each, one for academies and one for "poor" schools. In 1850, there were in the State 13 colleges, 1251 public schools, and 219 academies, with a total attendance of 77,015 pupils. Total white population 521,572.

Florida adopted a common school system in 1848. Her permanent fund is \$500,000, which will be largely increased from sales of school lands. In 1850, there were 69 common

schools with 1878 pupils, and 34 academies with 1251 pupils. Total white population 47,203.

Alabama has a permanent fund of \$2,010,971 37. The statistics are meagre, but her system is known to be improving. There are teacher's institutes, and efforts are making for a normal school.

Mississippi made provision for a common school fund in 1846, and in 1852, \$300,000 were distributed for educational purposes.

The new constitution of Louisiana provides for common schools. There is a State superintendent, who deprecates the defective system that exists. The statistics from these two States are by no means full or satisfactory.

The permanent fund of Arkansas is (present and prospective) estimated at \$2,000,000. The schools are in their infancy, and the State superintendent, though contending with many difficulties, is not disheartened.

Texas has a permanent fund of \$2,200,000, besides her school lands, which are estimated to be worth \$15,000,000. But beyond a provision of funds, Texas has made little progress with her common schools. If true to herself in this respect, and to her children, a great and glorious future is before her.

In 1823, Tennessee passed an act creating a perpetual fund for common schools. There is a permanent fund of \$1,500,000, and she has 3,500,000 acres of school lands, which will largely increase it. There is a state superintendent. The returns are not full, but for a State comparatively new, they are quite cheering. In 1850, there were 2,667 public schools, with 103,651 pupils—17 colleges, with 1605 students, and 260 academies, with 9,517 pupils. Total white population 756,836.

Kentucky has a permanent fund of \$1,443,164 73, with an income of \$164,513 50. There is an endowment by the State of \$12,000 per annum in Transylvania University for a normal school department, in which 116 students are annually prepared as teachers. In 1856, the Legislature passed an act leaving it to the people to say whether they would triple their

taxes for common schools ; and a majority of more than three to one out of 110,000 voters, voted *yea!* This is one of the noblest votes of modern times, and is eminently worthy the liberality, the intelligence, and the manhood of "old Kentucky." The amount distributed was at once raised to \$286,-262 55. There were in 1850, 15 colleges, with 1873 student—2,234 common schools, with 71,429 pupils—330 academies, with 12,712 pupils; total attendance at all the schools, 130,917. Kentucky has a State superintendent. Total white population 761,413.

Ohio has a large permanent fund. The whole amount expended in 1855 for common schools was \$2,631,818 40. Total white population 1,955,050. There is a State superintendent. The State has no normal school, but teacher's institutes are annually held in all the counties, and there is a State teacher's association.

Michigan has a permanent fund of \$2,000,000, which is constantly increasing. The State distributed from the fund in 1854, \$130,996 69, and raised by taxation \$220,679 33—making in all \$351,676 02. There was also raised for libraries, by a two mill tax, the sum of \$67,179 55. There is a State superintendent. Total white population 395,071.

Indiana has a permanent fund of \$5,000,000, present and prospective. There is also a tax of one mill on the dollar's worth of property, and 50 cents on the poll, yielding in 1854, \$230,218 00. There was distributed for that year \$575,000. Indiana also imposes a tax for school libraries. There is a State superintendent. The State has no normal school, but there are teacher's institutes in all the counties, and a State teacher's association. Total white population 977,154.

Illinois has a permanent fund of \$3,500,000. Whole amount expended for schools in 1854, \$400,000. Average length of schools, 6 months. Total white population 846,034. The State has no normal school, but there are a number of teacher's institutes.

Missouri has a permanent fund of \$1,500,000, and the State appropriates one-fourth of the annual revenue for school pur-

poses. There is no normal school, but a number of teacher's institutes.

The new States of Iowa and Wisconsin have large and permanent funds, and are commencing excellent systems of schools; and the young State of California is also taking active and vigorous steps in the same direction.*

From the foregoing facts and statistics we deduce these results:

The average length of the schools of Maine, whose system is in a highly flourishing condition, is four months and three weeks; of New Hampshire, five months; of North-Carolina four months.

Maine distributes about 70 cents to the head of her white population; New Hampshire about the same; Connecticut, 95 cents; North-Carolina about 50 cents; Virginia, 8 cents; Connecticut nearly one dollar—Pennsylvania nearly the same as Connecticut; and New York and Ohio a fraction over one dollar each to their total white population.

North-Carolina, though her white population is 200,000 less than that of Kentucky, expends nearly as much as she does for educational purposes.

North-Carolina has a larger school fund than Maine, or New Hampshire, or New Jersey, (by \$1,500,000) or Maryland, or Virginia, (by \$600,000) or Massachusetts, (by \$500,000) or Georgia, (by \$1,600,000.)

North-Carolina has as many colleges as Georgia, more academies by 100, and 2,000 more common schools. The two States are about equal in white population.

North-Carolina has more colleges than South-Carolina, more academies by 100, and nearly three times as many children at school.

Virginia has 340,000 white population more than North-Carolina; yet the latter has quite as many colleges as the former, as many academies, and five or six hundred more public schools.

* I am indebted for these and other statistics, to the American Educational Year Book for 1856, to the American Journal of Education, to the Census of 1850, and the various Reports of Mr. Wiley, State Superintendent.

Kentucky has 200,000 white population more than North-Carolina; yet the latter has as many colleges as the former, as many academies, more common schools, by 1,000, and as many children at school as she has. The same is substantially true in the comparison between Tennessee and North-Carolina.

It must also be borne in mind that North-Carolina has no large cities, like Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia and Kentucky, to build up and sustain colleges and high schools.

Upon a calm review of the entire facts, it is neither immodest nor unjust to assert, that North-Carolina is clearly ahead of all the other slaveholding States with her system of public instruction; while she compares favorably in several respects with some of the New England and North-Western States.

But, though our educational condition and prospects are thus cheering, we have only made a good beginning in the great work. There are now from fifty to sixty thousand children in the State, *who never go to school*; we must reach these also, or the most of them, for in ten years nearly all of them who are males will be citizens, and will vote to make laws to govern you, themselves, all of us. What if they grow up in ignorance and vice, they will not be the only sufferers! The intelligent, the virtuous, and the owners of property especially, are all deeply concerned in this movement; and it behooves them to do every thing that can be done, justly and with reason, to prevent as well as to diminish vice and crime. Ignorance creates injustice and crime; injustice and crime create courts of law; courts of law create taxes; and men of substance have these taxes to pay.

What we need now, is:—

1st. *More and better teachers for our common schools.*—We have now, it is true, many competent and efficient teachers; but some means should be provided to increase the number. To this end, if we cannot have a normal school or schools under State patronage, we should organize and hold teacher's institutes in every county; and if not in every county, by all means in every congressional district.

2d. *Uniformity in our school-books*,—HOME-made books, if possible, but, at any rate, books that will do justice to our State and to the South; not sectional, but truthful and just. We want also, common school libraries.

3d. *An abiding interest in common schools by all the people, and especially by parents*; manifested by visiting the schools, by talking about them, by laboring to improve them, and by encouraging and holding up the hands of teachers, committee-men, and the officers of the system generally. The academies and colleges can take care of themselves; but common schools must be cared for or they will languish, and languishing, perish. Our college commencements and the examinations at our academies are crowded by the intellectual, the wealthy, the fashionable and the gay. This is well, and we are all glad to see it; but, my friends, who attends a common school examination? Have we any? And if so, how many? The Good Book informs us that “there was a little city, and a few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it. Now, there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then said I, wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man’s wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.” My friends, such things ought not to be. This “poor wise man”—COMMON SCHOOLS—will deliver—is delivering our State from the clutches of ignorance, and rescuing it and all its great interests from premature decline; let us neither despise his wisdom, nor close our ears to his words, nor be unmindful of his worth and his services, because his garb is plain and his station humble. Let us rather cheer him, and co-operate with him, and help him along; seeing that, as he is the beginning of all wisdom and all improvement, and the motive power of all progress, it is *we* who are really dependent on *him*, and not *he* on us.

4th. *Common cause, wherever it can be made, between the subscription schools and the common schools*.—Much good, I understand, has already been accomplished in this way. By uniting the State funds and the subscription funds, the schools

can be kept up seven or eight months in the year; which is as long on an average as the schools of Massachusetts and New York are kept open.

The experience of the Northern States is, that the success of common schools depends, not so much upon a large State fund as upon the interest taken in them by the people. There, they are the schools alike of the rich and of the poor,—*common* schools, because attended by all; and we shall never fully succeed with our system till we have made them so here. It was Daniel Webster who said—speaking of the New England common schools—“it is a reproach that public schools should not be superior to private.” “If I had,” said he, “as many children as old Priam, I would send them all to the public schools.” Our schools are called common, because they are open to all, because they are intended for all, and because they are attended by some of all; common as the waters, and the atmosphere, and the blessed light of day are common.

5th. *We need also a State Polytechnic or Military School.*—The dream of universal peace is a pleasant fancy, destined never to be realized. The moral improvement of the world has not kept pace with its intellectual; the most intellectual communities in the United States are the most unstable and aggressive, and the least disposed apparently to regard their constitutional and moral obligations. We must deal with human nature and with States and nations as we find them. Possessed as we are of a peculiar institution, so thoroughly interwoven with our domestic peace, and so essential to our continued progress and prosperity, it especially becomes us to cultivate a martial spirit. We must prepare our sons for all the duties that may lie before them, whether in civil life *or in the paths of war!* Our rights and the peace of our fire-sides must be defended in the last resort, by every drop of blood and by every ounce of treasure that we have. Virginia, on the one hand, expends fifty thousand dollars per annum on her military schools, and South-Carolina on the other, thirty thousand dollars; yet we have no public military school,—

there are but eight or ten volunteer companies in the State, and our militia system is neglected, and entirely inefficient.

There is no cheering or triumphant future for North-Carolina, or for the South, but in constantly improving systems of public instruction, and a continued and vigorous progress in schemes of improvement both by land and water. Public instruction is the parent of enlightened improvement of all descriptions, just as surely and as truly as that ignorance is the parent of public torpor, of social debasement, and of general poverty and crime. It has been well said, that "if De Witt Clinton had never been born, and the first conception of the whole scheme of internal improvements of New York were yet to be formed, they would certainly and inevitably result from her system of common schools." And so we may say, if our system of common schools had been in operation in 1820, and had been then what it is now, our State would have been among the first, as it is the very last, to pierce the Alleghany mountains and reach the great lines of railway and of navigation connected with the Mississippi valley. The travel and the wealth of that mighty region might long since have been poured down through our own interior and into our own ports, forcing a direct trade with all portions of the world ; but instead of this, our improvements have languished till within the last six or seven years ; and our great line of central railway is now halting and hesitating, as it should not halt and hesitate, fifty miles east of the Swannanoa Gap.

But the men of 1815 and of 1825 are passing away. In their day, looking to the difficulties that surrounded them, they did well, and we honor them for it. They will leave to us a State with a spirit above fear, as her character is above reproach ; with a credit sustained, and always sustained, without a blot ; with as fine a climate, as varied and prolific a soil, as many minerals, as much water-power, and with as many resources of all kinds as any people on the earth possess, occupying not more than fifty thousand square miles of territory ; and, above all, they will leave to us an enlightened and constantly improving system of public instruction, as the

groundwork for maintaining and perpetuating the great common inheritance of civil and religious freedom. But we want more mind—more *educated, practical* mind—to bring out these resources, to master this matter, to render it convenient and useful, and available for wealth and power. We want more of educated, thinking, investigating, enterprising mind on our farms, in our workshops, in our mines, on our railroads and public improvements, at the heads of our schools and our presses, and in our halls of legislation. We must learn to build our own roads with our own iron, and stock them from our own shops; to improve our rivers, where they can be improved; to work our own mines, keeping all the profits from them that we can at home; to build our own ships, and sail them to all parts of the world from our own ports; to produce our own hay and corn, and not depend on other States for them, as we are now doing; to make our own schoolbooks, and educate our own teachers for our common schools; to educate our children at home as far as may be, not sending them abroad for that purpose;—and in these ways, and in all ways, we must learn to be *North-Carolinians indeed and in truth*.

Here, then, is work to be done, and this generation must do it. Are we not equal to it? Shall we falter or retrograde? Never! But to attempt to stand still is to retrograde—we must either go on or go back. What then? Why, the path of duty, of patriotism, of prosperity, of glory, is right before us, wide, clear, palpable, gleaming like the milky way across the heavens. We could not miss it if we would. Let us walk in it with an iron will and with unfaltering step. Let us go forward, with the tramp, tramp, tramp, of a new era in the history of our beloved State,—always remembering, that it is more difficult to preserve a State from decay than it is to found it; and that no free people can hope to perpetuate their liberties without constant and general mental and moral culture.

Holden, William Woods, 1818-1892.
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